423 boundary marker is usually a pile of stones, a tree, a wadi, or, a line recorded on paper by two parties and given to a third to hold in case of future differences of opinion.

342 361 [656] In the extreme southern pastoral zone, there were few permanent houses but with new government land registration laws the number is increasing. The settlement pattern in this area might be characterized as a scattered homestead type, "homesteads" being defined as tents or houses whose location is permanent. Tents are seldom, if ever, moved these days even during a heavy rainy season. This is because barley production [657] has increased, and, mainly because government aid programs supply fodder for the sheep. Bedouin shepherds in the pasture area change dwelling places, but only to move their tents from their winter protective hiding places out into the open for the springtime, or to move from their tent into the stone house for the cold, rainy winter. In either case, no real change in location is involved.

342 The tent is called bait al-'Arab ("house of the Arabs"). There are two types: the bait al-saif ("summer house"), and the bait al-rabi'a ("spring house"). The summer tent, made of "gunny" and flour sacks sewn together, is for protection from the sun. The spring tent is the real Bedouin tent. It is [286] woven from the wool of the sheep and camel hair, and is used [239] during the winter. Most Bedouin now say that they cannot afford [435] the 125 Egyptian pounds (1 pound = $2.80) which the bait al-rabi'a costs to make or buy.

173 land along the coast: "This land was free, and the man who
[36] planted on it owned it. We call this (method of claiming land)
425 wad'a-l-id ("laying on of the hand," i.e. seizure). There was
[423] plenty of freedom in those days. A man could farm or keep animals." Planting and caring for the land is not novel to the Bedouins of al-Qasr.

423 The Bedouins claim that the pattern of land distribution
425 established during the time of Abu Mahjuba prevails today.
•656 Further, they say that these rules will never change, no matter
[178] what laws come out of Cairo: "Land registration can mean nothing where the tribes are concerned, for no Bedouin would be willing to take the land of another Bedouin. The government forces us to register our land so that it can be stated in the newspaper that they are giving the Bedouins land."

*613 The relationship between ecology and lineage territory
423 is not striking, such as in the case of the Cyrenaican Bedouins
182 of Libya (Peters 1960). In most cases, lineage territories run on a north-south line cross-cutting the coastal garden and southern pastoral zones. Hence, lineage territories are, generally, ecologically similar rather than contrasted. However,
*613 there are exceptions. 'Ailit Shraif lineage (see Figure 3a
423 below), at the western end of al-Qasr's 'izba sector, settled
182 there "because of the abundance of underground water in this
241 area: the ground is rocky here and the water comes out fresh
[312] like the Nile." Their founder, Sayyid Shraif, "specialized"
[361]

*613 423 182 241 [312] in farming, and he found this land "good for raising mint and vegetables." To the southeast of the 'izba, the lineages of Lazumi and Ma'fas found the land suitable for barley and grazing. This area is rain-fed. There are no wells and so vegetable crops are not possible here. The members of these lineages say that their ancestors were "real" Bedouins in Cyrenaica, and did not wish to become farmers in Egypt. It *613 182 184 241 is interesting to note that the Lazumi and Ma'fas are the richest lineages in all of al-Qasr. They were, perhaps, better able to maintain the traditional style of life which all of the Bedouins claim is "the best." But all Bedouins of al-Qasr depend to some degree upon horticulture or arboriculture. [231] And most families own a few sheep or goats. Both Lazumi and Ma'fas garden in their coastal sections, and Shraif members own sheep.

•656 423 Land registration has a history in the Western Desert. The government attempted it a number of times, but with little success until 1959 when the General Desert Development Organization (GDDO) undertook its program of land reclamation. But the 361 342 178 Bedouins were settled long before this. In al-Qasr, the Bedouins began to erect permanent stone dwellings on the land about the time of the First World War. In the Matruh area, elder informants agree that before 1914 the Bedouins lived in tents outside the 361 648 town area. When the British came, they began to move into town. Many of the Bedouins built houses in Matruh between the years

423 the structure of both the nomadic and the sedentary tribe:
648 "Settlement should take place on the basis of granting each individual capable of working in agriculture a piece of land, the area to be fixed by the state, calculated to ensure the raising of his living standard and to enable him to support himself and his legal dependents on condition that he start cultivation of the land. When distributing the land, care should be taken that a family be settled on a single piece of land composed of the total of the plots granted to its members, the family being composed of relatives to the first grandfather" (Abu-Zeid n.d.).

From this point, each Arab country dealt with the problem of the nomad in its own way, some effectively and others
423 not so effectively. Not until 1958 did Egypt make a formal
657 effort to integrate the Bedouins of the Western Desert into
656 the national society. And it was not until 1960 that the so-called "Desert Law" of 1958 (U.A.R. Law Number 124) was activated and enforced. The most important provision of this law followed the plan formulated at the Baghdad conference: "There is no recognition of tribal possession of land which is considered as belonging to the State, and whenever a family develops and plants on a holding, this gives it the right, if approved, to the issue ot a title to it by the government." Law Number 124 also provided that land occupied by buildings or orchards before 1957 can be owned by the occupants at a low

423 cost payable over a period of thirty years. As pointed out
657 by Professor Abu-Zeid (n.d.), this law is welcomed in part
• 656 because the garden area to which it really applies (the garden area in al-Qasr would be the 'izba sector) is not considered "tribal territory" or lineage-owned as are the barley and pasture regions.

653 Governmental activity growing out of the "Desert Law"
177 has been an important catalyst for social, economic and
*613 political change. All of these aspects of change had repurcussions on the lineage system and the authority structure of the Bedouins. In 1959, the government entered al-Qasr with the goal of revitalizing and reorganizing the hydraulic system of the area. The revival of the Roman water system, especially the network of cisterns covering the southern region of al-Qasr, and, on the coast, the restoration of the well system and underground galleries, the drilling of new wells and the intensification of olive farming have all led to a levelling of economic differentiation between lineages and between individuals.

659 In 1956, the Egyptian government passed the Cooperative
177 Law (U.A.R. Law Number 217) establishing agricultural cooperative
474 societies throughout the country. But not until 1959 did this law have any impact on the tribes of the Western Desert. Generally, the cooperative society has served as a primary
[433] and successful agent of social change in the desert. It has

These gardens furnish staples for local consumption and more cash crops for the Marsa Matruh market. Matruh is dependent upon these vegetable goods from al-Qasr, to the extent that the Governor has forbidden the Bedouins to truck their goods to the higher priced market in Alexandria.

The success of arboriculture in al-Qasr has been the result of a well-organized reclamation program in this area by the government. The relatively good supply of fresh water and the proximity of a large market town has made al-Qasr an atypical case in the government's attempt to transform the desert pastoral economy. Since 1960, the government's program has met with a great deal of success. Such results have, of course, induced the Bedouins of al-Qasr to accept change, and have further enhanced the future of the program. The figures below show, as of 1964, the plant distribution of orchards in the 'izba of al-Qasr, and indicate the measure of success attained by the governmental reclamation program.

The environmental conditions of al-Qasr are particularly well-suited for the olive tree: the olive has been the basis of the economic transformation of al-Qasr. The Bedouins tend to play down the government's role in developing olive arboriculture in the al-Qasr area. But before 1960, only the very wealthy men could afford to deal in the olive market, since it involves a great initial financial risk. Hence, prior to the entry of the government's program, there were 2,743 olive trees

175 for legal interpretation. For instance: "We are also told
671 by Yahya that (the Caliph) Mu'awiya ibn Sufian said that a
177 wound on the body should be assessed at half the value of
671 that wound on the head or face" (1935:324). Maliki law,
177 derived in large part from the Bedouin traditions of Arabia,
may be seen to characterize the legal norms of the tribal-based
social structure in the Western Desert. The Bedouins of al-
[428] Qasr themselves claim that they are within the bounds of
[562] Islamic Law when they deny the female the right to inherit,
though they do have other, and more secular, justifications
for the practice.

671 As we have already noted, in the above quote from the
182 "holy man" of al-Qasr, the Bedouins feel that the 'awaiyid
648 can succeed where governmental law will fail. They say that
"the government does not understand the problems of the
Bedouins," that "government troops cannot function in the
desert." They feel that they need the 'awaiyid for the sake
of political order itself: "If the Bedouins did not have
the 'awaiyid, they would eat each other. The 'awaiyid is so
important that a man who commits a wrong in town will lie
to the government, and then dutifully return to the tribe for
Bedouin justice."

•[656] In 1933, the government "abolished" the 'awaiyid
and insisted that the Bedouins settle their difference in
the civil courts in accord with Egyptian law. According to

423 311 619 can he do this, but he can also sell that right. The right to sell the share of the tribal land has recently become recognized in the Western Desert, and the usufruct right is being treated in the same way as ownership.

423 311 619 233 While the boundaries of the cultivable land belonging to the tribe are guarded, when it comes to grazing land, the boundaries are not so much enforced. The tribes of the Western Desert of Egypt are quite tolerant in allowing members of other tribal segments to graze their flocks wherever grazing lands are available. Everyone from any tribe can graze his flocks in areas that offer better pasture. But in doing so, he does not have the right to use the wells and cisterns of the tribal segment. [312] [432] Water is scarce and valuable. Cisterns are owned by the tribal segments, and if an outsider wants to use the water, he has to buy it from the owner for the whole season for a sum ranging between $100-$180.

423 656 In 1958, with the extension of the Mariut irrigation project, a Desert Land Possession Law was enacted and came into force in 1960. This law restates the right of the government to the ownership of the land, and therefore does not recognize the tribal possessions of the land, even when they have made certain improvements in it, such as planting trees or digging wells. However, it gave the right of the occupants of a certain area of land to request either the purchase of the land or its lease for a period not exceeding nine years, granted that such is made within one year of the passing of the law. Failing to do so within one year, the government will either remove the plants and buildings, or confiscate them without compensation.

423
656 The above law met with opposition from the tribal population in the area. As a result of this opposition, a new law was enacted in 1964 (Law #100). Although this later law eliminated some of the shortcomings of the previous one, it is not itself without disadvantages. The 1964 law recognizes the Bedouins' right of ownership only in areas where the fairly permanent trees were planted before 1958. Rain-fed areas cultivated from season to season are excluded. The new law also provides for the sale and transfer of land. Any person can purchase up to 50 feddans (acres) provided that he can develop it into an economic enterprise. The law also provides for the distribution of arable lands in such a way as to permit each head of household to own 10 feddans and to be provided with water possibilities. The price of this kind of land is to be paid over a period of 30 years. Settlers are encouraged and helped in planting trees and building dikes. So far, 8,600 feddans irrigated by windmills have been pssessed by members of Awlad Ali tribes, and titles to their holdings are being issued.

[312]

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423 With regard to grazing lands, no legislation has yet been issued,
656 and the government feels that at this stage of development, it is essential to start educating and inducing the tribal population of the Western Desert in initiating and implementing new programs for preventing overgrazing and controlling the number of flocks.

The Group

619 The name Awlad Ali covers a number of ethnically distinct groups. In addition to Awlad Ali proper (the descendents of Ali), referred to as the Sa'adi, it includes a number of Murabiteen (holy men) tribes who are attached to various segments of Awlad Ali and occupy an inferior political position. The name also includes various peasant

There was some smuggling
439 of goods across the Libyan border, but this smuggling was done on a
648 very small scale. Before the Egyptian government imposed restrictions on imports, the prices of the goods in the Libyan market were close to their prices on the Egyptian market. Except for a very few items which were not found on the Egyptian market, smuggling goods from Libya offered
653 a very limited financial gain to the smugglers. In recent years, this situation has changed, however. With population increase in Egypt threatening disaster, and with the cultivable land in the valley reaching its maximum productivity, the attention of the government was drawn to the fertile yet dry land of the northern strip of the Western Desert as a possible means of expanding the cultivated area. A number of projects are taking place at the present time under the land reclamation act. The most important of these projects is the Eastern Mariut project which is directed toward the irrigation of the lands of the Western Desert through the channelling of the flood waters of the Nile into a network of canals covering an extensive area of the northern strip of the Western
315 Desert. Also, recently, oil has been discovered in the area, and since
457 the end of the Second World War, the area has been a major attraction for tourists.

439 More important is the increase in traffic of smuggled goods from
[651] Libya. Custom restrictions on imported goods to Egypt have created a
[656] scarcity of American and British manufactured goods which raised their price on the Egyptian market and made smuggling a profitable activity. An opposite-direction smuggling of sheep and goats from Egypt to Libya
[315] created a great shortage in the Egyptian meat market. Before the discovery of oil in Libya, the Western Desert area supplied the Egyptian

His success in solving disputes between members of his baits and outsiders might enhance his prestige within the bait, but it is not a substitute for patrilineal succession as the basis of the Aqila's authority. But in less integrated baits the situation is different. The ineffectiveness of the Aqila in solving disputes may lead members of his bait to seek another man as their representative who would act as a mediator in their behalf. If this continues for a long time the Aqila might find himself with no functions and the new person would become a de facto Aqila.

The Aqila represents the only effective indigenous form of leadership among Awlad Ali at the present time. The camp headman provides another form of leadership on the camp level, but, as mentioned before, the leadership of the headman is very limited and involves minimal authority. In addition to the indigenous leadership represented by the Aqila, there is the superimposed administrative structure of the government representative in the form of the "omda" system introduced into the area by the government decree no. 1187 of 1958. The system of omda or mayorship is essentially that applied to the rural areas of Egypt with certain modifications to fit the tribal organization and the semi-nomadic existence of the populations of the Western Desert. In rural areas, the omda is the administrative head of the village. He is appointed by the government from among the village inhabitants who have certain qualifications with regard to education (must be able at least to read and write), wealth (own at least 5 feddans of land in the area), and sound reputation. As such, the omda system in the rural areas is a territorial system. The omda's authority covers the territory of the village and all individuals living in it regardless of their kinship affiliation.

581 585 671 675 are necessary for the validation of the marriage contract. Modern legal systems which took as their basis the Islamic law of marriage and the family further required the registration of the marriage contract for the marriage to be legal.

584 585 429 593 The request and necessary response forming the marriage are supposed to be carried on by the parties involved. However, if either the groom or the bride is not of age, or is mentally unqualified, the transaction is carried on by his or her guardian, or "wakil." The wakil is the father, unless he is dead or an invalid, in which case the brothers [604] become the wakils. If the person has no brothers, then the uncles be- [184] come the wakil in the order stated. According to certain Sunni sects in Islam, a woman marrying for the first time is always represented by her wakil, even if she is of age. The assumption is that a woman who has never been married does not have the experience that enables her to enter into any kind of legally binding relationship such as marriage.

585 675 593 429 [604] Following the original Islamic idea, marriage among Awlad Ali is an oral agreement between the groom or his father and the guardian (wakil) of the bride-to-be (her father, if alive, or her closest male kin in the following order: her brothers, her uncles, her grandfather).

585 792 [619] [778] A religious man is sometimes asked to perform the marriage, although it is not required. Some persons might invite a member of the Hurabiteen tribe or holy men to witness the marriage on the basis that his presence gives "baraka," or blessing, to the marriage. Before the application of

585 656 177 [675] [634] the State legal system to the area, marriage contracts were not registered. In recent years, however, and with the increased mobility of the tribal populations, more and more marriages are being registered in the administrative districts. Still, according to the unofficial estimates,

Still, according to the unofficial estimates, only about ten per cent of all marriages are registered, and these are mainly mixed marriages involving a tribal person and a non-tribal one or a tribal member who is not living in the area anymore. The reason is that such a spouse, especially when he is the husband, is not under the control of the tribal customs and therefore cannot be forced to fulfill his obligations if he fails to do so. Most of the tribal population still feel that marriage is a personal and family affair that should be kept away from the State legal system.

Marriage among Awlad Ali is a relatively informal procedure. When a man decides to marry a certain girl, he informs his mother who, in turn, informs his father. The father may have objections to his son's choice of the bride. Such objections may be based on already strained relations between the two families or the questionable reputation of the girl or any member of her family. In such cases, the father tries to dissuade his son from going ahead with the marriage. The father is usually successful in controlling his son's choice when the latter is dependent on his father for the payment of the bridewealth called "mahr" and for the support of his new household. This is usually the case in the man's first marriage. In subsequent marriages and in the cases where the son has independent means of support for himself and his bride, the father's control of the son's choice is minimal, and asking the father's approval is a matter of formality. In second and subsequent marriages, the approval of the older wives is essential. The older wives have no right to object to the husband taking an additional wife, but they have the right to object to the choice on the basis that the new bride is hard to get along with or that there is animosity between her family and the families of the other wives which makes